

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1465

To provide additional discretion to the Secretary of Homeland Security in designating countries eligible to participate in the visa waiver program under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 2007

Mr. WEXLER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To provide additional discretion to the Secretary of Homeland Security in designating countries eligible to participate in the visa waiver program under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) As of the enactment of this Act, the visa
6 waiver program under section 217 of the Immigra-
7 tion and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187) enables

1 citizens of 27 countries to travel to the United
2 States for tourism or business for 90 days or less
3 without obtaining a visa.

4 (2) In fiscal year 2006, more than 18,300,000
5 people entered the country under the program.

6 (3) The visa waiver program provides many
7 benefits for the United States economy and bilateral
8 relationships, and strengthens tourism and business
9 opportunities for American citizens.

10 (4) The visa waiver program is a substantial ex-
11 pression of the strong ties between the United States
12 and its allies in the global war on terror.

13 (5) Expansion of the visa waiver program would
14 enhance the security of the United States as well as
15 travelers to the United States.

16 **SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL DISCRETION FOR CONSIDERATION OF**
17 **VISA REFUSAL RATES.**

18 The Secretary of Homeland Security shall have the
19 authority to waive the requirements of section
20 217(c)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
21 U.S.C. 1187(c)(2)(A)) with respect to a country seeking
22 designation as a program country under section 217(c) of
23 such Act, if the Secretary determines that—

24 (1) the country has developed a viable plan to
25 meet the requirements within 3 years;

1 (2) the country has made significant progress
2 in reducing its nonimmigrant visa refusal rate in the
3 previous 2 years;

4 (3) waiver of the requirements would not com-
5 promise the security or welfare of the United States;
6 and

7 (4) the country has fully cooperated in
8 counterterrorism and information sharing initiatives.

9 **SEC. 3. SECURE TRAVEL STANDARDS REPORTING.**

10 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
11 of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in con-
12 sultation with the Secretary of State, shall submit a report
13 to the Congress that describes plans for enhancing secure
14 travel standards for program countries designated under
15 section 217(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
16 U.S.C. 1187(c)), including the feasibility of instituting an
17 electronic authorization travel system, additional pas-
18 senger information exchanges, and enhanced airport secu-
19 rity standards.

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